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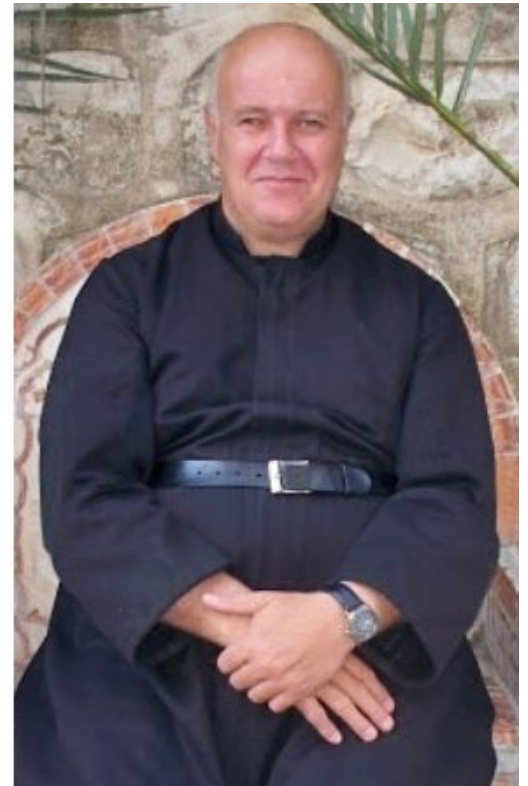
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SSPX GAVE PEDOPHILE REPEATED ACCESS TO BOYS

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by Christine Niles

(https://www.churchmilitant.com/news/author/christinenileschurchmilitant.com) •

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Vatican corrects Bp. Fellay's bad actions



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Father Philippe Peignot has a 40-year track record of pedophilia, stretching back to 1978 — but most disturbing is the way leadership in the Society of St. Pius X (SSPX) repeatedly granted him access to young boys to abuse again.



Fr. Philippe Peignot

One of his victims, André (a pseudonym), whose story was covered in the 2016 Swedish documentary *Golden Prison* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMhXFi4meFU), spoke with Church Militant.

"I've done everything I could, but this predator is still free and around children," he said.

A softspoken man in his mid-forties, André explained how the abuse started — in 1988, when he was 11, going on to detail how over the course of decades SSPX leadership failed to act adequately against Peignot, repeatedly betraying its promise to restrict the pedophile's access to children.

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Peignot, who had been ordained for the SSPX in 1982, had come to Christ the King Priory in Brussels that year in 1988 — fresh from a one-year stint in Lourdes, where he had been ordered by then-Superior General Franz Schmidberger (with the knowledge of longtime France district superior Fr. Paul Aulagnier) to do a year of prayer and penance for his sexual abuse of five boys in Champagne-Ardenne, where he had been stationed from 1985–1987.

Among those victims was Vincent Lambert, the famous quadriplegic who became a central figure in the end-of-life debate in France, his Catholic family fighting a protracted court battle to keep their disabled son alive against the orders of the hospital, which wanted to remove his feeding tube.



Vincent Lambert, the late quadriplegic at the heart of the end-of-life debate in France. Lambert was a victim of Fr. Philippe Peignot's abuse.

The family lost their legal battle in July 2019

(<https://www.churchmilitant.com/news/article/vincent-lambert-dies-rip>), when France's highest court ruled in favor of the hospital. Vincent died nine days after his feeding tube was removed.

While media coverage noted the car accident that landed Lambert in the hospital, almost none mentioned how the accident came about: a troubled existence involving drinking and drugs, the result of the abuse he suffered at the hands of the SSPX priest when he was a boy, culminating in the car crash while he was driving intoxicated.

Peignot has admitted to his abuse of Lambert.

"I recognized my share of responsibility in the [Vincent] Philippon-Lambert case and in the end, I accepted the restriction of activities imposed on me," he wrote in a 2013 document obtained by Church Militant, in which Peignot denied the abuse allegations brought by André, who claims the priest sexually assaulted him repeatedly from 1988 to 1989, in the SSPX priory in Brussels, Belgium.

André's Abuse

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According to André's written testimony (<https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.avref.fr/fichiers%2FAVREF-livre-noir-FSSPX.pdf&data=02%7C01%7Cchristineniles%40churchmilitant.com%7C084ad25d0ea84ef4da9808d7efaaf2fd%7C38730c95612649a68c8f84a7a81f7b6d%7C1%7C1%7C637241389833075095&sdata=MbVy8yERjvRR5KNwhdUIW8wjlwU6k%2B%2F6UNommj383A%3D&reserved=0>) of abuse, found on pp. 11–13 of *Le Livre Noir de la Fraternité Sacerdotale Saint-Pie X* ("The Black Book of the SSPX (<https://www.avref.fr/fichiers/AVREF-livre-noir-FSSPX.pdf>)"), Peignot would hold Catechism lessons on Saturdays with a small group of boys, and afterwards would often invite André alone into his office. The priest also helped lead the junior scouts organization of which André was a part.



Fr. Franz Schmidberger, former superior general, who went back on his own ban of Peignot and allowed him to lead youth scout camps

In order to curry favor with the 11-year-old, he gave him kid-sized Mass items to play with, and even allowed him to handle Peignot's Mass kit, which contained a consecrated chalice, ciborium and paten. The priest would call him by the nickname "my little priest" — a moniker the boy disliked.

In the beginning, the priest would play with him by sliding him down his legs, picking him up into his lap, where he pushed him against his private parts before letting him slide. He also at times caressed André and kissed his face — actions that caused revulsion in the boy. But his parents, who were deeply involved in the SSPX, insisted that he be obedient and respectful to the priest, an authority figure they entirely trusted. Thus André felt obligated to allow the priest to continue with his signs of "affection," even though they caused him disgust.

The overt abuse began one day in the priest's office, when he invited André to sit on his lap and showed him his smoking pipe. It was during this time he slid his hand up André's thigh and fondled his genitals.

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Similar abuse continued on multiple occasions over the course of a year, the priest at times authoritatively ordering André into his office, the boy feeling as if he had no choice but to obey.

The most serious assault took place in Peignot's car. He had persuaded André's parents to let him take the boy to la Chapelle Saint-Aubain, the SSPX chapel in Namur

(<https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsspx.be%2Ffr%2Fhistorique-du-district&data=02%7C01%7Cchristineniles%40churchmilitant.com%7C59a3a2cce1bf4737e3ab08d7f043aeb0%7C38730c95612649a68c8f84a7a81f7b6d%7C1%7C0%7C637242045793159480&data=Bh1Wnyz8gurwNIEpWXeBvVcIXCaTNI0cTi4nFR9QGNc%3D&reserved=0>), one of the

parishes he served. During the drive and without warning, he lifted his cassock to reveal an erect penis and shoved André's head into his lap.

"He lifted his soutane and wanted to force me to perform fellatio on him," André wrote. "He was violent and making movements with his hips."

0:00

WATCH SPOTLIGHT—SSPX: 'SYMPATHETIC TO PERVERTS'


(<https://www.churchmilitant.com/news/article/spotlight-sympathetic-to-perverts>)

Struggling against the priest, the boy managed to break free, slipping through the car seats and taking refuge in the backseat. The priest nearly lost control of the car, swerving several times on the road.

"I was terrified, and threatened to jump from the car if he tried anything," André wrote.

I was terrified, and threatened to jump from the car if he tried anything.

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“He told his parents when he came home about what happened, but they refused to believe the SSPX priest would have deliberately attempted to abuse their son, dismissing the incident as merely an accident and the result of misunderstanding.



Bp. Bernard Fellay, former superior general, who lifted the ban on Fr. Peignot, allowing him to lead scout camps

André, still required to attend Saturday Catechism lessons and junior scouts with the priest, struggling to cope with his abuse, became a troubled youth, soon becoming violent and turning to alcohol. He sought every means to escape Peignot, while his parents insisted he continue with his lessons, refusing to believe an SSPX priest was capable of abuse.

After an argument with his parents, André even threatened to jump from the second-floor balcony of his family home — only for his mother to call Peignot for help, who manipulatively told him he was "causing pain to his mother."

The last time Peignot touched André would be in 1989, at summer scout camp, the priest persuading his parents to send him in spite of his protests.

During one of the night games played by the scouts, when André was hiding alone in the woods, Peignot followed him, creeping up from behind. Taking him by surprise, the priest forcefully lifted him off the ground and thrust his hand inside André's shorts to masturbate him. André struggled, fighting him off and landing a strong punch to the priest's gut. Peignot let go and André took off running.

The priest never touched him again.

SSPX Inaction

"I first reported the abuse to France's district superior in December 1990, Fr. Paul Aulagnier," André told Church Militant. "He looked more annoyed than surprised."

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Fr. Paul Aulagnier, district superior
of France from 1976–1994

André would later learn that the two priests had been friends. Aulagnier had been aware of Peignot's abuse of five boys in his prior assignment in Champagne-Ardenne, from 1985–87.

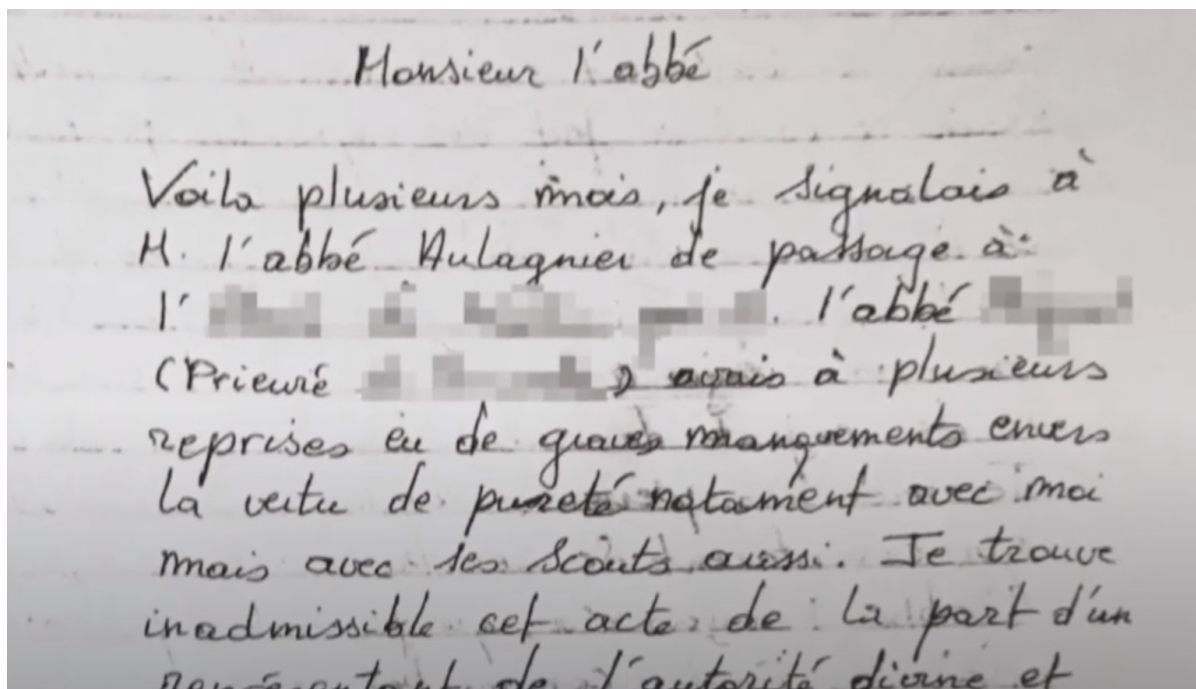
Aulagnier reported Peignot to Schmidberger in Dec. 1990, but Peignot stayed on at the Brussels priory, with apparently no action taken against him.

Incidentally, Aulagnier is considered a towering figure in French traditionalism, among the first to join Abp. Marcel Lefebvre in 1969. Lefebvre appointed him district superior in the all-important French district for nearly 20 years, from 1976–1994, and Aulagnier was widely thought to be one of the bishops Lefebvre was going to consecrate in 1988. Aulagnier was eventually expelled from the Society in 2004 for publicly supporting the Apostolic Union Saint Jean-Marie Vianney, a group of traditionalist Brazilian clergy who broke ranks with the SSPX to be in full communion with Rome. He is now a key figure in the Institute of the Good Shepherd (<http://www.instituteofthegoodshepherd.org/>), a society of apostolic life established in 2005 under Pope Benedict that offers the traditional liturgy.

After months of no response from SSPX leadership in 1990, André wrote to then-Superior General Franz Schmidberger requesting information on what actions would be taken against Peignot.

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Monsieur l'abbé

Voilà plusieurs mois, je signalais à
M. l'abbé Aulagnier de passage à
l' [redacted] l'abbé [redacted]
(Prieuré [redacted]) avoir à plusieurs
reprises eu de graves manquements envers
la vertu de pureté notamment avec moi
mais avec les scouts aussi. Je trouve
inadmissible cet acte de la part d'un
Représentant de l'autorité divine et

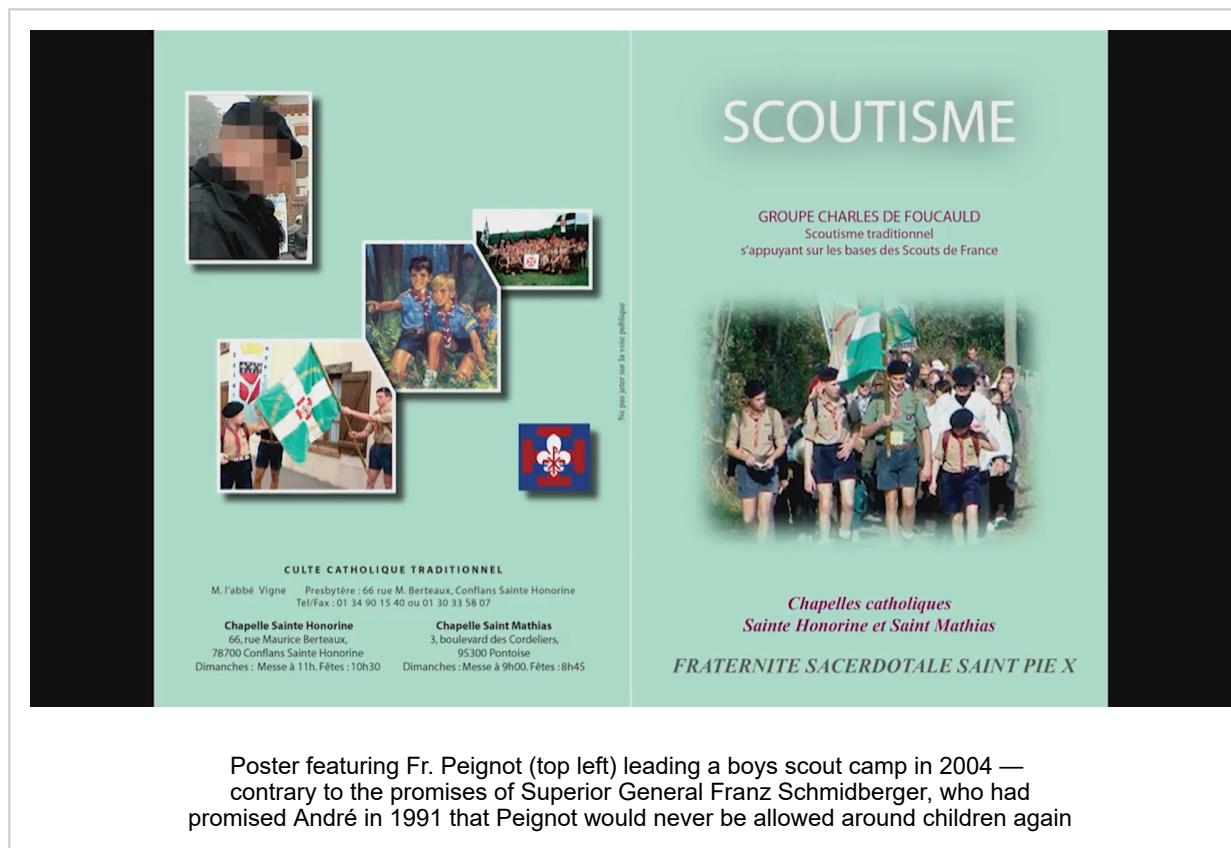
Excerpt of André's letter to Fr. Franz Schmidberger

While André's parents at this point believed Peignot had inappropriately touched their son, they trusted Society leadership would appropriately handle the matter.

Schmidberger answered André in a letter explaining the Society was aware of Peignot's abuse and had issued a *monitum* (a canonical warning) against Peignot. He also promised that Peignot would never be allowed around children again, a promise André believed — until he spotted a poster almost 20 years later featuring the priest leading a boy scout camp.

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Poster featuring Fr. Peignot (top left) leading a boys scout camp in 2004 — contrary to the promises of Superior General Franz Schmidberger, who had promised André in 1991 that Peignot would never be allowed around children again

It was an official poster produced by the SSPX, for the Charles de Foucauld scouts group in Conflans Sainte-Honorine, in the northwestern suburbs of Paris. It showed a photo of Peignot amidst a collage of photos of young boys.

André was furious.

He wrote a strongly worded letter to Bp. Bernard Fellay in 2008, who by then had succeeded Schmidberger as superior general. Fellay responded in July citing ignorance of the matter and apologizing for the oversight.

"The facts you relate took place before my first mandate as superior general, and when I became head of the Society of St. Pius X, I thought this sad affair had been handled," he wrote. "But reading you, it seems that's not the case. I ask you to please forgive us."

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FRATERNITÉ SACERDOTALE
SAINT PIE X

+Menzingen, le 5 juillet 2008

Cher Monsieur

Veuillez pardonner mon retard à répondre à votre courrier du 29 mai, et n'y voyez pas là, s'il vous plaît, un quelconque désintéressement de ma part ou une volonté de ne pas vous écouter, mais ces derniers temps plusieurs voyages m'ont tenu éloigné de Menzingen et m'ont rendu difficile le suivi de ma correspondance.

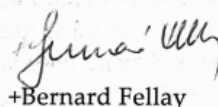
J'ai en effet bien reçu votre lettre et l'ai lue attentivement, et je puis vous assurer que je prends la chose très au sérieux. Les faits que vous relatez, se sont déroulés avant mon premier mandat comme supérieur général, et lorsque je suis arrivé à la tête de la Fraternité Saint Pie X, je pensais que cette douloureuse affaire avait été réglée, mais à vous lire, il semble que ce ne soit pas le cas. Je vous prie donc de bien vouloir nous en excuser.

Afin de pouvoir au mieux réparer cette négligence, j'ai confié la charge de ce dossier à Monsieur l'abbé Niklaus Pfluger. Je vous invite donc, si vous le voulez bien, à prendre contact avec lui pour un entretien ici à Menzingen ou ailleurs, selon vos possibilités et les siennes.

Pour ce qui regarde l'abbé Peignot, depuis longtemps tout apostolat avec des enfants lui a été retiré et je ne crois pas que d'autres cas se soient présentés.

Vous assurant de l'union ma prière, je vous prie d'agréer, cher Monsieur l'expression de toute ma sollicitude.

Avec l'assurance de ma bénédiction



+Bernard Fellay

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2008 letter from then-Superior General Bp. Bernard Fellay in response to André's complaints regarding Peignot

He promised to send Fr. Niklaus Pfluger, first assistant to the superior general, assigned to investigate the case, to meet with André.

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It was during the meeting with Pfluger that André would learn Fellay had not been honest about his ignorance of Peignot's status, and that in fact it was *Fellay himself* who had lifted the ban from the priest and allowed him to be with children, making it possible for him to lead the very boy scout camp featured in the SSPX poster.

Damning Audio Recordings

André met twice with Pfluger, once in 2008 and again in 2009, and secretly recorded both meetings, audio evidence revealing damning admissions of neglect and failure to follow proper procedure on the part of the Society's highest leadership.

Fellay's investigator came to the meetings armed with a cache of documents and letters, to and from Peignot, making clear the SSPX was aware of other victims and had placed an absolute ban on Peignot on being around children — a ban that Society leadership had routinely and inexplicably flouted, placing Peignot around children for many years.

Pfluger also admitted fault on the part of the superiors general in their handling of the case: "Father Schmidberger did not follow protocol. The procedure was not correct on his part, canonically."

The letters show that restrictions had been placed on Peignot in 1990, following André's report of abuse, and that Society leadership believed the abuse had in fact occurred.

Recorded 2008 Meeting With Fr. Niklaus Pfluger and ...



Audio recording of André's 2008 meeting with Fr. Niklaus Pfluger, First Assistant to then-Superior General Bp.

Bernard Fellay.

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Pfluger had been placed in charge of investigating the case of Fr. Philippe Peignot.

"There is a ban on organizing scout camps, of being around children," Pfluger acknowledges, later reading from a 1991 letter from Schmidberger to Peignot (after Peignot had complained about his restrictions).

"The assertion is clear. On several occasions there has been impure touching of children in your car and in your office," Schmidberger wrote to Peignot. "It is necessary that you refrain from any ministry near children or young people. You are therefore officially prohibited, henceforth and forever, from youth camps."

The wording could not have been clearer.

“The gravest fault on our part was above all why we failed to apply it [the absolute ban on Peignot].

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Yet Pfluger revealed it was Aulagnier himself who had violated this prohibition, assigning the pedophile to the priory in Conflans Saint-Honorine, with free access to children, including the boy scouts at that chapel, only *one year* after this absolute ban had been imposed by Schmidberger.

Even worse, Peignot was allowed to remain at Conflans Saint-Honorine, with continued access to boys, for *nine years*.

"Thus from 1993 to 2002. We're talking nine years!" André said to Pfluger in disbelief.

"It's truly unclear why Fr. Aulagnier, or why Fr. Schmidberger failed to correct Fr. Aulagnier with respect to that," said Pfluger.

"And that is incomprehensible to me," André said.

"Yes, it's incomprehensible," Pfluger agreed, later adding, "For nine years! That's, that's unbelievable!"

Pfluger admits Society leadership had no excuse for ignoring the ban: "The gravest fault on our part was above all why we failed to apply it."

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Montgardin, the remote French retreat house where problem SSPX priests are sent to do prayer and penance before being restored to ministry

Later France district superiors, Fr. Pierre-Marie Laurençon and Fr. Régis de Cacqueray, were also guilty, either transferring Peignot or leaving him in assignments where he had easy access to children.

But Pfluger revealed it was *Schmidberger himself* who went back on his total ban, later agreeing to allow Peignot to lead a scout camp, after Peignot vigorously protested the veracity of André's allegations.

"In that moment, by telephone, Fr. Schmidberger speaks with Fr. Phillippe François," Pfluger explained to André. "Peignot returns to Rickenbach [then global headquarters of the SSPX], to the general house. He has the green light to organize a scout camp."

"Excuse me for interrupting you, but that's something I don't understand!" André says.

"But that's it, that's the problem!" Pfluger admits. "Father Schmidberger changed his mind. That's the problem."

“Peignot acknowledges that Fellay himself had gone back on the ban, allowing him to remain at the priory and organize youth camps with children.

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Stunningly, Pfluger also admitted — among other damning evidence — that it was also Fellay himself who had lifted the ban on Peignot from being around children, after Peignot wrote to him asking to lead a scout camp.

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The ban had been imposed by Fr. Pierre-Marie Laurençon, French district superior at the time. Peignot had written a letter to Fellay complaining about the restrictions, leading to Fellay's decision to lift Laurençon's ban.

From a letter dated July 12, 2002, Peignot writes, "When the problem was raised two years ago, we talked and you allowed me to continue activities at the priory and camps"

In other words, Peignot acknowledges that Fellay himself had gone back on the ban, allowing him to remain at the priory and organize youth camps with children. The SSPX has never denied this fact.

Vatican Intervenes

Unhappy with the SSPX's handling of the matter, André wrote to the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF). In a July 17, 2013 letter (https://drive.google.com/file/d/12dU9hhiN-4Yo_7fgvmyJToNyFVPXtGvJ/view?usp=sharing), Cdl. Luis Ladaria, then-Secretary General of the CDF, responded by sending a letter to Bp. Fellay asking that he begin a canonical trial against Peignot.

"In view of this difficulty, and in order to guarantee the exercise of justice in the spirit of canon 1717 sec. 3 CIC, this dicastery requests that you name another delegate charged with carrying out to completion the administrative trial with regard to Fr. Philippe Peignot," Ladaria writes.

As the SSPX commenced canonical proceedings, Fellay ordered Peignot to live at a remote retreat house in Montgardin, in the French Alps, nicknamed the "Golden Prison": It's the place where problem priests, whether those accused of abuse or other infractions, are sent by the SSPX to serve out their time in prayer and penance, before being reinstated back to active ministry.

Trad Sex Crimes (1) - The Golden Prison



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The Golden Prison: Part I (https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=666&v=gMhXFi4meFU&feature=emb_logo), a 2016 documentary highlighting the case of Fr.

*Philippe Peignot and his abuse of André,
and the SSPX's failure to restrict the priest.*

The SSPX's canonical trial resulted in a guilty verdict on June 25, 2014, resulting in a number of restrictions on Peignot's ministry — restrictions made known to the CDF, and communicated to André in a 2017 letter from Fr. Christian Thouvenot, secretary general to the superior general, after the CDF requested that the SSPX inform André of the results.

"This conclusive decree definitively prohibits Fr. Philippe Peignot from any ministry with minors, if it involves preaching retreats or recollections to youth, Catechism or spiritual direction, and all activities involving supervision or chaplaincy of pilgrimages, of formation of children in serving Mass, of teaching chant, etc.," Thouvenot wrote.

Ce décret conclusif interdit définitivement à M. l'abbé Philippe Peignot tout apostolat auprès des mineurs, qu'il s'agisse de la prédication de retraites ou de recollections à des jeunes, de catéchisme ou de direction spirituelle, et de toute activité d'encadrement ou d'aumônerie de pèlerinages, de formation des enfants au service de messe, de répétition de chant, etc.

Excerpt from Fr. Christian Thouvenot's letter explaining June 25, 2014 judgment against Fr. Peignot

Peignot responded in July rejecting the judgment, refusing to go to Montgardin, as ordered by Fellay. Fellay wrote back in August warning Peignot he was in danger of being expelled from the Society if he refused to comply, afterwards writing to the CDF in September requesting that it ratify the SSPX's canonical judgment against Peignot.

In December 2014, the Society learned that Peignot had left the Society to join Bp. Richard Williamson's Resistance, where he ministers to this day.

Peignot was formally expelled from the SSPX in a decree signed by Fellay on Dec. 12, 2015.

As shown, the Society only took definitive action against Peignot after the Vatican intervened — and only once André requested it — nearly 40 years after the first abuse allegation, decades during which the lives of multiple boys were devastated by Peignot's abuse, left to struggle to come to grips with an SSPX priest who stole their innocence and destroyed their trust, all while Society leadership repeatedly violated its own ban, transferring, reassigning or leaving in place for years a known pedophile with free and unfettered access to children.

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A Pedophile Roams Free



Fr. Philippe Peignot

None of the abuse André suffered would have happened had the SSPX refused to ordain him after learning of the first abuse allegation in 1978, when Peignot was living as a monk in Riaumont. Neither would André — and perhaps other silent victims — have suffered had the Society handed Peignot over to authorities in 1987, after learning of his abuse of five victims in Champagne-Ardenne.

But as is the habit of the Society, crimes against children are handled internally, leadership not reporting perpetrators to police and instead imposing largely meaningless bans that are violated by their own leadership, or else sending offenders away for brief periods of "prayer and penance" in some isolated location before reinstating them to active ministry, where they often go on to abuse again, devastating more young lives — while Society leadership never admits responsibility.

Incidentally, the location of André's abuse in Brussels was the same place where, years later, convicted pedophile Fr. Frédéric Abbet would be assigned to live by Superior General Bp. Bernard Fellay (<https://www.churchmilitant.com/news/article/sspx-deflection>) — another case of gross criminal negligence by Society leadership, which led the prosecutor in the criminal case to insist it was the SSPX, and not just Abbet, which should've stood trial, and which prompted the secular court to accuse the SSPX of fostering criminal behavior by placing Abbet, a known pedophile, under the same roof as young boys. Abbet was convicted and sentenced to prison in 2017, currently serving out his sentence in Switzerland.

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In a strange twist of irony, the office where the abuse by Peignot took place in 1988 is today called 'la chambre de l'évêque' ('the bishop's quarters'). It is the room where Bp. Fellay sleeps when he travels to Brussels.

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In a strange twist of irony, the office where the abuse by Peignot took place in 1988 is today called "la chambre de l'évêque" ("the bishop's quarters"). It is the room where Bp. Fellay sleeps when he travels to Brussels.



Fellay allowed Peignot to take part in the ordinations in Écône, Switzerland in 2015

To this day, Peignot roams free, serving in a chapel in Espiet, near Bordeaux, where he is regularly around young boys unsupervised.

Meanwhile, André continues to seek justice, his allegations part of an ongoing criminal investigation by French authorities. His case remains in limbo, the statute of limitations having passed on most of the sexual assaults, while the incident of attempted rape in Peignot's car is less clear.

Other victims or witnesses of Peignot's abuse are encouraged to send their testimony to the Procureur de la République of La Roche-sur-Yon, in Vendée, France.

In spite of Peignot's sordid history of abuse and his expulsion from the Society, Fellay allowed him to take part in the 2015 ordinations at Écône, Switzerland

(<https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.churchmilitant.com/index.php/news/article/sspx-gave-pedophile-access-to-boys>)

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catholique.fr%2Farchives%2F111693&data=02%7C01%7Cchristineniles%40churchmilitant.com%7C8bf949c270b24dc0ffea08d7f07e8540%7C38730c95612649a68c8f84a7a81f7b6d%7C1%7C0%7C637242298507249661&sdata=k%2BOoCcx0B0Zp0ORZIVifDxgPzqGenfB6R6YMMtBIZrM%3D&reserved=0), offering Mass and placing his hands on the heads of newly ordained SSPX priests.

He would not have been allowed to take part without Fellay's knowledge or permission.

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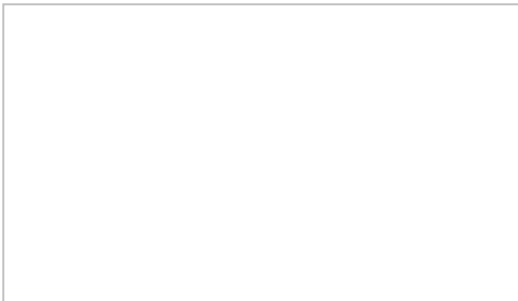


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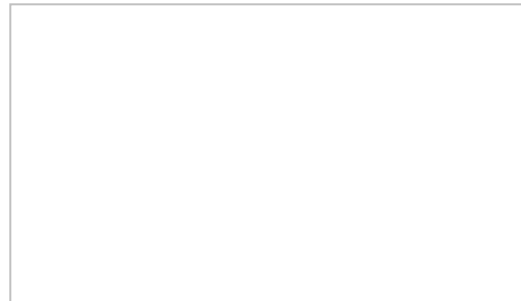
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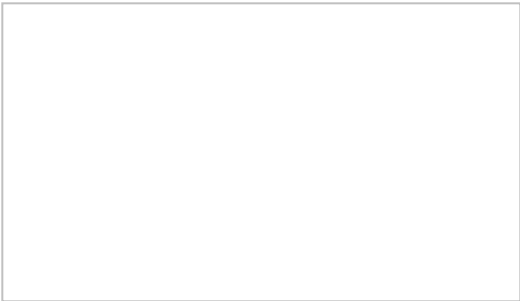


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**Simon Rafe** Mod • 6 months ago

We realize a common reaction to this kind of horrific abuse is a call for violence, physical or capital punishment, etc. against the perpetrators. Certainly, some form of punishment is due and just. It is also true a case can be made for various forms of punishment.

This is not the forum to make them or to engage in fantasies about extreme justice (or otherwise . . .) meted out. Some comments of this nature have been deleted. Future comments will be deleted (if we miss them, flag them). Calls and prayers for justice are one thing - "hang 'em high" (or discussions about the Church's position on capital punishment etc.) are another (and by "another" we mean "will not be tolerated here"). This article is about the abuse, not a tangential fantasy discussion about Charles Bronson-esque justice.

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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

January 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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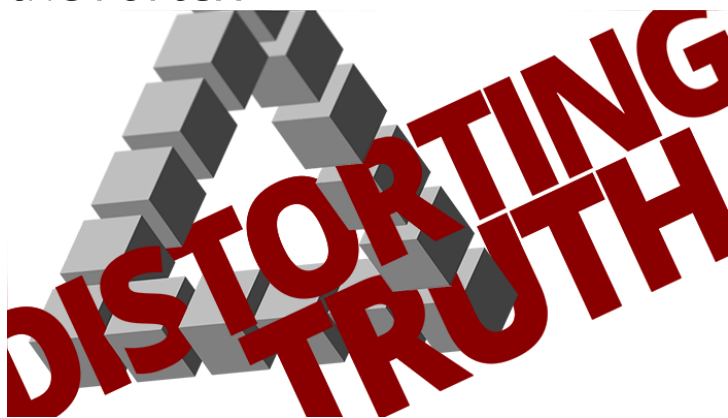
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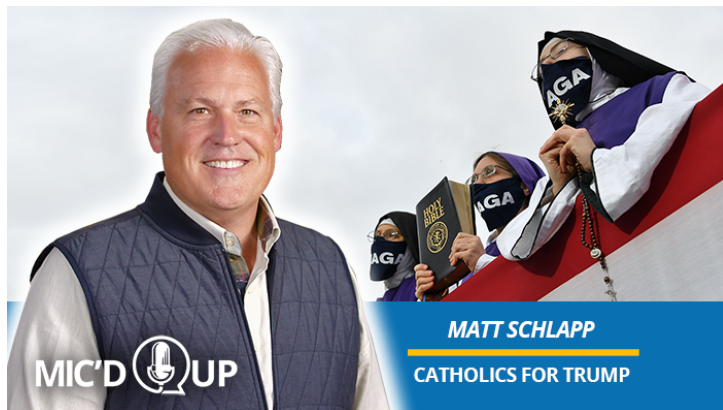
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